

McManus Minutes

March 26, 2004

Senate approves anti-hazing bills

The Michigan Senate this month unanimously approved legislation that I and Senator Cassis sponsored to ban hazing at Michigan's schools and universities. Todd Price of Ferris University first brought this issue to my attention and testified before the Senate Judiciary committee. Members of the Senate also heard dramatic testimony from Garett Drogosch, a Northville middle school student who spent months in a wheelchair following the football team's traditional 'Eighth Grade Hit Day.' Because Michigan law does not currently address hazing, this event was not a crime. The bills call for a one-year, \$2,500 misdemeanor against those who hurt another through hazing and a 15-year, \$10,000 felony against those who kill another through hazing. Hazing victims would not be punished, even if they willingly participated in the hazing. In addition, the legislation removes student consent as a defense in hazing cases.

This legislation is a great step forward to ensuring the safety of the students in the 35th district and across the state. No student should be subject to the physical and emotional scaring that hazing can leave. If the bills are signed into law, Michigan will no longer be one of seven states without anti-hazing laws. Senate Bills 783 and 784 have been referred to the Home Committee on Criminal Justice.

'Bad Driver Law' fixed

Legislation waiving a \$300 fee for motorists who fail to show proof of insurance when pulled over has been sent to the governor. As amended, the bill allows a driver to appear prior to the appearance date on the citation and show proof that they had auto insurance at the time of the violation. If they do this, no court fines or costs may be levied and the citation will not go on a person's driving record. It also provides for reimbursement of drivers already assessed. The legislation provides drivers with 60 days to appear in court and appeal the court's ruling that resulted in the assessment being charged in the first place. The legislation does not remove the civil infraction for failure to show proof of insurance. This civil infraction has been on the books for years, long before the Driver Responsibility Act. Courts may still assess a \$25 fee for tickets issued, even if a driver appears in court with proof of insurance. If you have questions about this fee or how to have the fee waived, please do not hesitate to contact my office for more information.

Michigan Manufacturing Day

This week the Senate passed legislation that I sponsored, Senate Bill 1026, to create a Michigan Manufacturing Day on the second Friday of May. The Manufacturing Day will give us an opportunity to recognize manufacturers' important role in our society. It encourages manufacturers to open their facilities to young people, teachers, and parents, so they can visit and learn about Michigan's manufacturing culture and history. Manufacturing has tremendous historic, scientific, economic, and cultural significance to Michigan and this is a great way to teach our children about the rich heritage of Michigan.

Cable Show

Each month you can watch "Conversation with State Senator Michelle McManus" and hear about issues affecting the 35th District. You can see my show on: Traverse City TV 2, Friday nights at 8 P.M. Cadillac Cable TV, 1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 7 P.M. Manistee Cable Access, 3rd week of the month Tuesday-Friday at 8:00 P.M. Currently airing for March is the Cadillac Area Land Conservancy. I and representatives of the conservancy discuss land use and preservation in the Cadillac region. Coming up for April we will be discussing the MESPA (Michigan Education Savings Program) and MET (Michigan Education Trust) programs.

Contact Information

Thank you for your interest in our current state issues. If you would like to receive future legislative updates via e-mail, you can sign up at: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/mcmanus>, you can also call my office toll free at 866-305-2135.